



FEMA

Disaster News

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FEMA AND CIVIL DEFENSE JOIN FORCES TO PROVIDE DISASTER ASSISTANCE

HONOLULU – The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Hawaii Department of Defense, Civil Defense Division, have joined forces to provide federal and state assistance to individuals and households and for public infrastructure located in the city and county of Honolulu and Kauai County for damages resulting from severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides that occurred between February 20 and April 2, 2006.

At the request of Governor Linda Lingle, President George W. Bush issued a major disaster declaration for the city and county of Honolulu and Kauai County on May 2. The President's action makes federal funding available. The assistance, to be coordinated by FEMA, can include grants to help pay for temporary housing, home repairs, and other serious disaster-related expenses. Low-interest loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration also will be available to cover residential and business losses not fully compensated by insurance.

The presidential disaster declaration also makes federal funding available to Hawaii and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations for emergency work and the repair or replacement of disaster-damaged facilities. FEMA's Public Assistance program provides grants on a 75 to 25 percent cost-sharing basis. The federal funds are shared among the state of Hawaii and local entities with the Hawaii State Civil Defense acting as administrator of the grants.

The federal disaster declaration also makes funding available for hazard mitigation grants. Working in cooperation with the state of Hawaii, FEMA can fund cost-effective mitigation measures that would reduce or eliminate the threat of future damage to a facility damaged during the disaster. The program can provide the state up to 7.5 percent of the total disaster grants awarded by FEMA.

Governor Lingle named Vice Director of Civil Defense Edward Teixeira as the State Coordinating Officer (SCO) for the joint disaster recovery effort involving the State, Kauai County, the City and County of Honolulu and FEMA.

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Acting FEMA Director R. David Paulison named Mike Karl as the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) for Federal recovery operations in the affected areas.

“Residents and business owners in the affected areas who sustained losses can begin applying for assistance immediately,” Karl said. They can register online at www.fema.gov or call 1-800-621-FEMA(3362). Those with hearing or speech impairments can call 1-800-462-7585 (TTY). These toll-free telephone numbers will operate from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. seven days a week until further notice.”

The phone conversation takes about 20 minutes, Karl said. Callers will be asked for general information about their income, insurance coverage and damage to their residence or business. They should be prepared to give details about their housing needs, the location of the damaged property and a phone number where they can be reached.

Callers should have the following information available:

- Applicant’s full legal name
- Applicant’s Social Security number
- Current telephone number(s)
- Current and pre-disaster addresses
- Insurance coverage, policy number(s) and agent’s name
- Proof of residency
- Concise statement of the type, location, and extent of damage

“If you suffered losses due to the storms, you should register with FEMA -- even if you have insurance,” Karl said. “Disaster assistance still may be available to help you with uninsured or underinsured losses or expenses.”

State Civil Defense coordinates state-wide emergency preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation programs for a wide range of natural and human-caused threats and disasters including terrorism. As part of its responsibilities, State Civil Defense manages state and federal grants provided to local communities for disaster recovery and mitigation.

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

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More disaster information can be found on the Internet at http://www.fema.gov .
